THE VARIABILITY OF THE POPULAR VOTE AT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

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The stability of political tradition is a condition of considerable sociological importance. If political traditions are relatively stable they will furnish under ordinary conditions the guaranty of a consistent public policy. If political traditions are rigid and inelastic then public policy will not be likely to show a progressive adaptation to the changing social and economic conditions of national life. From being a source of strength their inertia will become an obstacle to advancement. If they find their only justification in precedent, in use and wont, their approval in mystic sanction and appeal to sentiment alone, then these political traditions will cease to be guaranties of progressive public policies. If, on the other hand, political traditions are unstable and vaporous, if they rest upon wild fancy divorced from fact, and if they depend for their potency upon emotional display or mob action, then the situation is equally unfortunate.

The group of partisans which adheres to a political tradition is a composite aggregate. It is never an unmixed product consisting entirely of those who follow its tenets with blind allegiance. Nor does it consist alone of individuals whose stand is the result of reasoned action. Large numbers have ranged themselves by personal feeling or class prejudice. Professor Giddings voices my idea when he says, "the membership of a political majority exhibits a complete gradation of mental development, from a quick and sensitive intelligence at the margin, where independent voting occurs, to stupid bigotry in the unstimulated interior of the mass."[1] This description of the composition of a political majority applies equally well to the composition of the tradition-adhering group. Indeed, it would be illuminating to compare political groups with

[1] Franklin H. Giddings, *Democracy and Empire*, p. 183.

reference to the numbers of individuals constituting this margin. We could say that the group which contained the largest margin of independent voters was, on the whole, a group with more elastic political traditions than the group with a smaller margin of independent voters. If historical analysis showed an increasing diversity in these margins we could safely assume the change as evidence of a decreasing rigidity in political tradition.

It is a statistical fact that the variability of the popular vote for president as between the States of the Union is on the increase. Instead of the popular vote for president as between states becoming standardized as time goes on, it is actually becoming diversified. We have a situation in which the response of large numbers of individuals, geographically grouped, is increasingly variable with reference to a given political stimulus. If the political action of these individuals grouped by states showed increasing numerical agreement, we might say that it was due to the standardizing effect of political tradition. The fact of the matter is that the political action of these individuals grouped by states shows an increasing numerical variability, and it becomes important to determine whether this increasing numerical variability is evidence of independent political action.

The variability of the popular vote for president is shown by the series of standard deviations in Table I, columns II and III. The variability of the Republican vote for the Republican nominee for each presidential election since 1856, is shown by the series, 73–100–98–103–96–111–127–131–147–143–202–194–224–203. The variability of the popular vote for the Democratic nominee is shown by the series, 51–73–91–95–81–107–114–123–141–143–142–152–130–148. The real significance of these two series is better grasped after an examination of Chart I where the standard deviations are plotted as ordinates over the corresponding presidential year as abscissae.

The essential point to be noted is the rapid increase in the variability of the popular vote since 1856. This increase has been steady with but minor fluctuations and holds for both Republican and Democratic votes in almost equal degree. The apparent divergence since 1892 should not receive too serious consideration.

In connection with the increasing variability of the political votes of the two principal parties, it is interesting to note the

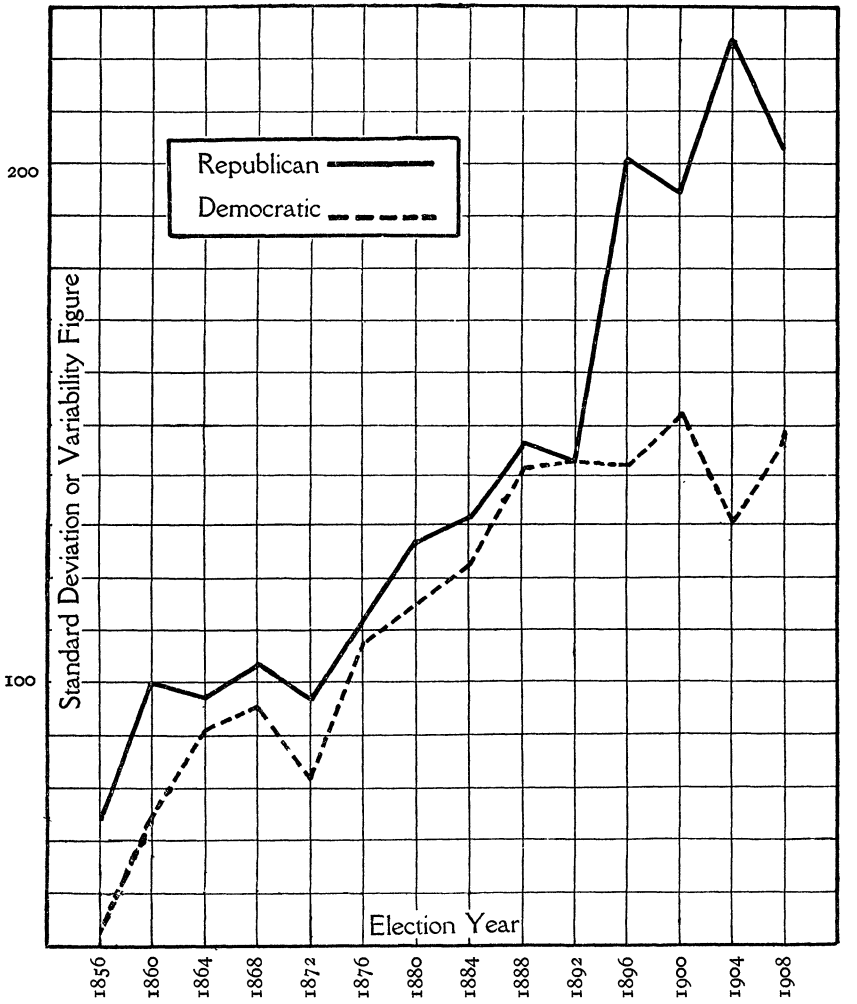

CHART I.—Variability of popular vote (median taken)

behavior of the variability of the percentages of those of voting age who actually voted these years. This variability series is given in column IV of Table I and the plot for this series is shown

in Chart II. It will be seen that the variability of the percentages of those of voting age who actually voted increases in practically the same ratio as that of the other two series and follows closely their fluctuations. See Chart III.

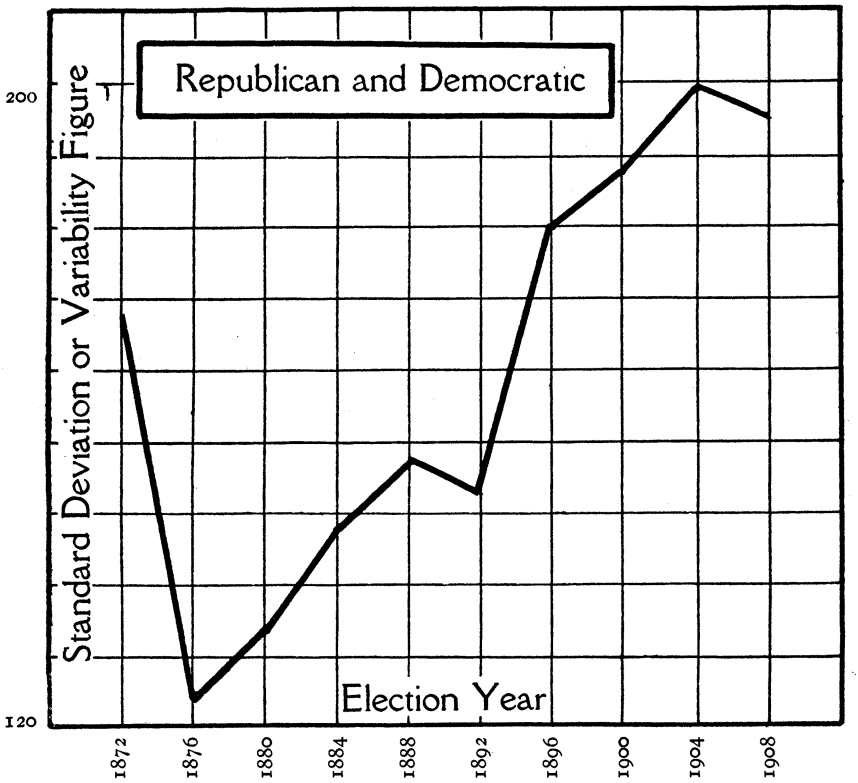

CHART II.—Variability of percentage voting (based on median)

The extent to which this increasing variability is evidence of real independence in voting must now be considered. The question of causation is here concerned with what I shall term statistical causes and extra-statistical causes. If the increasing variability of the series is due to mere chance arrangement of the figures then we have a case of statistical causation. If the increasing variability is due to independent voting then we have a case of extra-statistical causation.

If the increasing variability is due to mere chance arrangement of the figures then the two most powerful statistical causes are: (1) The admission to the Union from time to time of new states

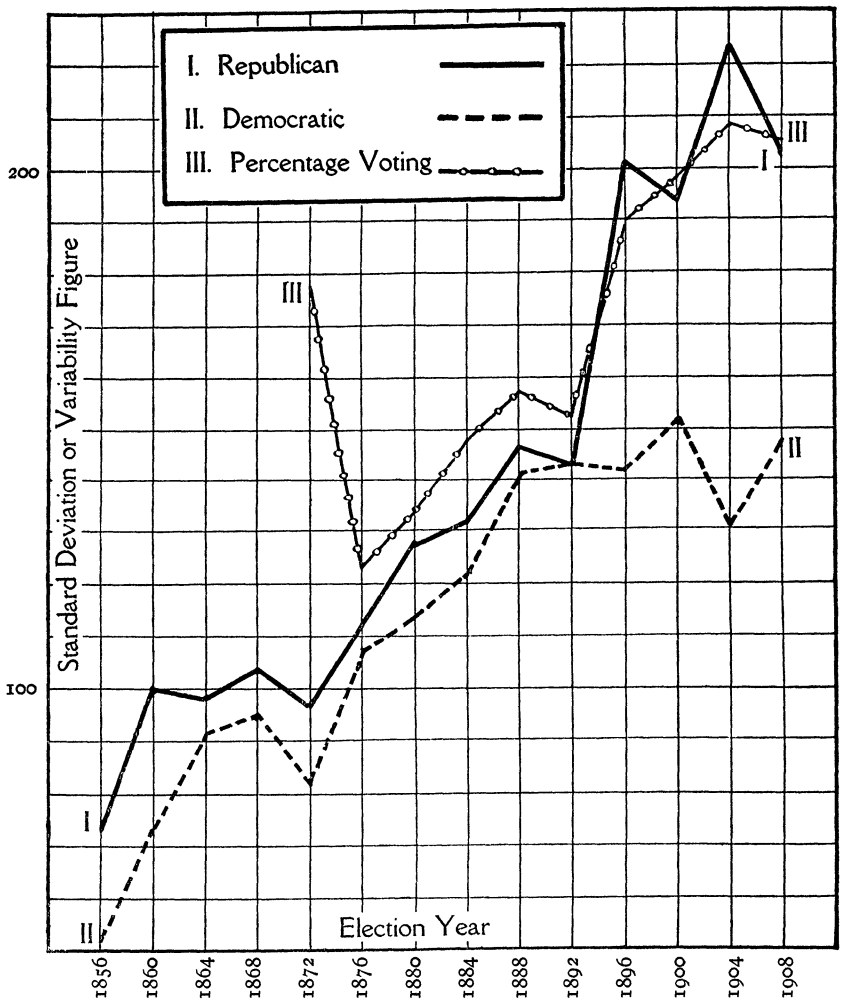

CHART III.—Variability of popular vote and variability of percentage voting

with a small voting population. This would serve to intensify the divergence between the number of votes of the small states and the number of votes of the large populous states and would increase

TABLE I

VARIABILITY OF REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC VOTES AT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS BY STATES AND VARIABILITY OF PERCENTAGES OF MALES OF VOTING AGE VOTING AT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEAR	STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF		STANDARD DEVIATIONS OF PERCENTAGES OF MALES OF VOTING AGE VOTING	MEDIANS OF PERCENTAGES VOTING	NUMBER OF STATES SHOWING IN PERCENTAGE VOTING		
	Republican Votes	Democratic Votes			For Period	Decrease	Increase
I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
1856....	73	51	...	....	...	..	..
1860....	100	73	...	....	...	..	..
1864....	98	91	...	....	...	..	..
1868....	103	95	...	....	...	..	..
1872....	96	81	177	64.4	1868–1872	19	9
1876....	111	107	124	75.9	1872–1876	2	38
1880....	127	114	134	73.8	1876–1880	20	10
1884....	131	123	148	71.3	1880–1884	21	11
1888....	147	141	157	74.0	1884–1888	9	22
1892....	143	143	153	66.8	1888–1892	26	8
1896....	202	142	190	71.1	1892–1896	15	25
1900....	194	152	198	63.4	1896–1900	28	11
1904....	224	130	209	58.4	1900–1904	34	3
1908....	203	148	205	60.5	1904–1908	18	17

EXPLANATION OF TABLE I

Column II, Standard Deviation of Republican Votes, was obtained by computing the standard deviations of the votes by states for each election year. For example, the figure 73, opposite the year 1856, was obtained as follows: the Republican votes by states for 1856 were arranged in series of descending magnitudes; the figure 53 is the standard deviation or mean square variation of this series. The procedure was similar for the other figures in column II. Column III was obtained in manner similar to column II.

Column IV, Standard Deviations of Percentages of Males of Voting Age Voting, was obtained by computing the standard deviations of the percentages in the columns of Table II. Only the standard deviations of the percentages for the years 1872 and following were computed, as it was believed that the accuracy of the percentages for years prior to 1872 was uncertain.

Column V, Medians of Percentages Voting, gives the simple medians of the series of percentages of the columns of Table II.

Columns VII and VIII were obtained as follows: a careful study of the percentages of Table II showed that for the period 1868 to 1872 a certain number of states showed decreasing percentage voting while others showed increasing percentage voting and some remained practically constant; the figures in columns VII and VIII represent the number of states showing this increasing or decreasing percentage for the period indicated.

SOURCE

The source used by the writer for the number of votes cast by political party, by state, by presidential election was the compilation published in the *Fact Book* (published by the Current Literature Magazine Publishing Co.) under the direction of Dr. Francis Rolt-Wheeler of the Current Literature Publishing Co. of New York. The data were compiled for the first time from official figures provided especially for the purpose by the secretaries of state for every state in the Union, by the respective chairman of the Republican, Democratic, Socialist, Labor, Prohibition, and other parties for every state, by the chairmen of the national committees of the political parties, by the personal records of presidential candidates, and forms the most authoritative data upon the subject.

the variability of that year's series. (2) The unequal increase of population of voting age as between different states. Thus, a very large increase in the voting population of the most populous states would intensify the divergence of potential voters as between the states and might cause the increasing variability of that year's series.

That the variability is not a result of the first consideration is shown by Table III. The year of greatest increase in the Democratic variability was 1876, when the figures increased from 81 to 107 and yet no new states voted Democratic in 1876. In 1880, when Colorado voted for the first time, Nevada was already a member of the Union and cast a smaller Republican and Democratic vote than did Colorado. In 1892 five states voted for the first time, but were obviously not the cause of the Republican variability because Nevada, already in the Union, cast a Republican vote smaller than any of the five. The variability of the Democratic vote for 1892 may have been increased by the voting of the new states, Wyoming or South Dakota, because these states brought a new vote smaller than any other vote, thereby increasing the divergence. But it is to be noted that 1892 was a year of decreasing variability for the Republican vote and the year of slightest increasing variability of the Democratic vote, so that it cannot be claimed that the admission of the new states was a cause of the variability. Table III also shows that the admission of Utah in 1896 and of Oklahoma in 1908, was not the cause of vari-

ability for those years, for at both of those years there were other states in the Union with smaller votes, i.e., Wyoming and Arkansas. Table III therefore demonstrates that the variability of the popular vote is not due to the admission to the Union of new states with small vote.

That the variability is not a result of the second consideration is shown by Table IV. The second statistical cause assumed that a very large increase of the voting population had occurred, increasing the divergence and hence the variability. Taking the year 1876 for the largest increase in Democratic variability (from 81 to 107), we find by Table IV that the increase in voting population for the decade 1870 to 1880 for the four populous states was considerably less than the increase in the decade 1880 to 1890 at which period the Democratic variability did not increase so rapidly. Taking the year 1896 for the largest increase in Republican variability (from 143 to 202), we find by Table IV that the increase in the voting population for the decade 1890 to 1900 was not as great an increase as that for the decade 1900 to 1910, at which period the Republican variability did not increase so rapidly. Table IV therefore demonstrates that the increasing variability is not due to the unequal increase of the population of voting age as between states of the Union.

Since the increasing variability is not due to these two statistical causes it is probably due to extra-statistical causes. Is the increase due to a growth of political independence on the part of a margin of voters? I will examine two considerations:

1 If a majority of the states show at the years of greatest increasing variability a higher percentage voting than at the preceding or succeeding election year, then we have evidence that the increasing variability is due to intelligent voting.

2. If, at the years of greatest increasing variability, there has been the shifting of a margin to one political party or to the other, then we have evidence that the increasing variability is due to intelligent voting.

For the more careful study of the first consideration Tables A and B have been constructed based in turn upon the more extensive data presented in Tables I, II, and V. It will be seen that for 1876

TABLE II

PERCENTAGE VOTES CAST ARE OF TOTAL NUMBER OF MALES OF VOTING AGE BY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

State	1856	1860	1864	1868	1872	1876	1880	1884	1888	1892	1896	1900	1904	1908
1. Alabama	46.1	51.0	.....	75.3	79.6	74.4	58.5	54.2	57.9	68.4	52.1	37.7	23.4	20.1
2. Arkansas	....	....	....	42.0	63.4	63.8	58.6	59.5	64.7	54.7	51.6	40.7	33.5	40.1
3. California	97.5	79.0	58.8	51.4	38.3	54.0	50.0	52.4	58.1	56.2	62.6	55.7	56.3	61.1
4. Colorado	....	....	....	....	....	....	57.1	53.3	60.3	55.2	....	....	....	....
5. Connecticut	72.7	64.2	65.8	76.7	63.5	74.0	74.3	70.3	72.2	70.6	67.5	86.4	61.0	57.0
6. Delaware	48.6	53.7	56.4	61.9	72.7	75.4	76.8	83.6	72.6	80.2	77.2	77.7	78.3	80.0
7. Florida	69.9	68.3	....	....	75.4	88.2	83.6	81.4	75.9	34.5	38.3	28.4	24.4	25.9
8. Georgia	82.3	69.5	....	72.3	55.8	62.2	49.0	41.0	36.3	52.7	35.4	23.4	22.9	22.1
9. Idaho	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	51.0	63.0	....	96.7	98.1
10. Illinois	61.5	74.4	66.4	70.6	69.7	75.9	78.0	73.5	72.7	80.2	97.5	80.7	70.1	70.4
11. Indiana	....	99.6	89.0	95.1	90.7	96.0	94.4	92.8	92.8	89.2	95.1	92.2	90.1	88.1
12. Iowa	63.8	68.3	59.4	71.2	64.4	80.0	77.4	84.0	81.1	82.0	88.3	83.4	74.8	70.8
13. Kansas	....	....	24.4	36.0	71.5	62.0	75.7	85.6	91.4	83.0	83.4	85.5	67.0	71.6
14. Kentucky	81.8	69.9	38.2	57.5	62.4	77.2	71.0	68.4	78.3	72.3	87.2	85.6	77.5	81.8
15. Louisiana	46.6	43.5	....	78.8	69.7	72.8	48.0	47.1	47.9	42.5	34.3	20.7	14.9	19.1
16. Maine	74.1	63.5	65.8	68.0	52.6	65.6	76.7	68.3	64.7	57.0	56.1	48.5	42.9	45.6
17. Maryland	68.9	64.2	45.2	52.2	68.5	77.2	74.5	74.9	79.5	72.3	83.6	82.1	67.3	67.9
18. Massachusetts	78.8	63.1	54.6	52.9	47.4	56.4	56.1	53.4	54.9	55.7	51.6	49.1	50.0	48.0
19. Michigan	98.0	84.1	62.8	56.6	62.2	78.7	75.3	76.3	80.9	73.1	80.2	75.6	66.8	64.6
20. Minnesota	....	....	....	....	66.3	71.3	70.6	67.7	77.8	67.1	82.0	62.4	53.2	53.0
21. Mississippi	87.7	73.5	....	....	74.4	82.3	48.4	47.8	41.7	17.2	18.2	16.9	15.3	15.8
22. Missouri	39.5	55.7	30.7	41.4	63.3	72.2	73.4	72.3	77.8	74.0	76.5	79.7	71.8	74.7
23. Montana	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	59.6	60.4	62.4	54.6	52.5
24. Nebraska	....	....	....	58.3	44.3	58.0	67.7	67.7	75.3	66.5	74.1	79.9	61.3	66.3
25. Nevada	....	....	....	....	77.1	89.5	52.7	44.1	55.5	57.2	54.1	57.5	46.6	63.1
26. New Hampshire	91.8	81.4	81.9	76.7	73.4	79.3	82.1	76.1	77.5	73.8	66.1	75.0	67.2	65.8
27. New Jersey	....	97.6	81.4	84.5	67.4	81.2	81.8	74.7	77.5	76.0	74.5	71.8	67.6	64.7
28. New York	60.8	66.1	66.1	72.0	69.1	77.2	78.8	75.3	77.9	77.8	71.1	70.8	66.1	60.0
29. North Carolina	70.9	64.4	....	94.4	70.7	89.5	81.8	85.6	86.0	78.2	81.4	70.0	45.6	51.3
30. North Dakota	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	55.7	59.2	60.7	58.4	67.1
31. Ohio	99.8	94.4	87.9	84.9	77.7	87.0	87.7	86.3	85.4	79.7	88.8	85.7	76.5	82.4

32. Oklahoma	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	65.1
33. Oregon	....	....	....	....	53.0	69.8	68.4	65.0	58.3	65.2	72.1	58.3	42.4	48.2
34. Pennsylvania	75.4	69.2	75.4	78.8	61.9	76.7	79.9	72.5	72.0	65.9	72.8	64.5	62.4	59.2
35. Rhode Island	....	99.7	65.1	42.6	31.1	38.5	38.0	39.0	42.4	50.1	47.6	44.4	48.5	46.3
36. South Carolina	....	....	....	77.3	60.2	96.1	83.0	42.6	34.5	28.6	25.9	28.5	18.8	20.5
37. South Dakota	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	70.4	78.1	85.3	72.9	70.3
38. Tennessee	83.6	74.9	....	33.3	64.4	74.0	71.0	70.3	78.4	63.2	71.8	56.2	47.4	47.6
39. Texas	....	69.2	....	....	42.6	49.6	63.5	73.9	70.9	72.8	82.0	56.0	27.9	31.0
40. Utah	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
41. Vermont	59.6	49.2	61.9	61.7	57.5	69.1	68.0	61.2	63.4	54.6	59.4	57.2	46.7	46.1
42. Virginia	79.1	88.1	....	....	66.1	76.6	63.6	81.6	83.0	74.4	70.5	58.9	27.2	27.1
43. Washington	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	56.0	53.4	54.9	49.2	46.2
44. West Virginia	....	....	....	....	60.6	....	80.9	86.3	93.7	88.6	96.2	80.9	85.7	81.4
45. Wisconsin	99.5	95.1	74.1	79.6	70.6	82.4	78.6	82.0	81.1	76.9	85.0	77.5	72.6	69.0
46. Wyoming	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	57.6	65.9	65.0	66.7	64.8
Median	....	....	....	....	64.4	75.9	73.8	71.3	74.0	66.8	71.1	63.4	58.4	60.5

Explanation of Table II

The percentages presented in Table II comprise the only compilation of the percentages by states of males of voting age who actually voted at presidential elections, that the writer knows of. The table was computed by the writer as follows: the total vote (of all parties) for each election since 1856 by states was obtained from the compilation of the *Fact Book*, referred to above; next, the total number of males of voting age for the decades ending in 1870, 1880, 1890, 1900, and 1910, by states was obtained from the United States Census; the percentages were obtained by dividing the census figures into the vote figures; where, as in 1872, the number of males of voting age was not given by the census, resort was made to estimates of the number of males of voting age for 1872, based upon simple graphical interpolation.

TABLE III

COMPARISON BETWEEN VOTES OF STATES NEWLY ADMITTED AND VOTES OF STATES ALREADY IN THE UNION

YEAR	STATE ADMITTED*	VOTE CAST AND POSITION				COMPARABLE STATE	VOTE CAST AND POSITION			
		Republican	Position	Democratic	Position		Republican	Position	Democrat	Position
1880....	Colorado.....	27,450	33	24,647	33	Nevada.....	7,878	38	8,619	38
1892....	Idaho.....	8,599	40	2	41	Nevada.....	2,811	42	714	40
	Montana.....	18,838	34	17,534	35					
	South Dakota.....	34,880	32	9,081	38					
	North Dakota.....	17,159	36	.....	..					
	Wyoming.....	7,722	41	8,454	39					
1896....	Utah.....	13,461	38	67,053	28	Wyoming.....	10,072	41	10,861	43
1908....	Oklahoma.....	110,558	23	122,406	20	Arkansas.....	56,679	31	87,015	24

* Colorado was admitted in 1876; Idaho and Wyoming were admitted in 1890; Montana, North and South Dakota were admitted in 1889; Oklahoma was admitted in 1907.

the variability of percentage voting is smaller than in 1872 or 1880, and that combined with this, 1876 shows a higher median percentage voting. We have a case of lower variability around the higher median—an index of intelligent vote as compared with 1872 or 1880. It will also be seen that for 1876 more states showed their highest percentage voting than in 1872 or 1880. Moreover, while a majority of states, 19 as to 9 and 20 as to 10, showed decreasing percentage voting in 1872 and 1880, the year 1876 showed a large

TABLE IV

INCREASE IN POPULATION OF MALES OF VOTING AGE

(From the U.S. Census Volumes)

State with Small Population	1870–1880	1880–1890	1890–1900	1900–1910
Colorado	67,314	71,312	20,788	85,940
Idaho	4,482	16,695	22,440	56,931
Delaware	8,263	9,261	6,459	7,889
West Virginia	43,844	42,239	66,570	90,379
State with Large Population	**1870–1880**	**1880–1890**	**1890–1900**	**1900–1910**
New York	249,850	360,898	415,316	651,808
Pennsylvania	228,401	367,585	355,370	491,787
Illinois	171,708	275,816	328,793	341,726
Ohio	185,757	190,887	195,757	272,043

Obtained from census figures of number of males of voting age for decades.

majority of states, 38 as to 2, having an increase in percentage voting. For the year 1896 there is a higher median percentage voting than in 1892 or 1900, and 13 states show high for 1896 as against 1 and 3 high for 1892 and 1900, respectively. Moreover, the majority of states in 1896 show increase percentage voting 25 to 15, as against majorities showing decreasing percentages in 1892 and 1900. For these reasons it is believed that the increasing variability is due to increased percentage voting, which in turn is evidence of increasing political intelligence.

Tables VIII and VI show respectively, the position of any state at every election year with reference to the percentage voting, and compare the states showing the highest and lowest percentages of

TABLE V

YEARS OF HIGHEST AND LOWEST PERCENTAGES VOTING BY STATES

State	1856	1860	1864	1868	1872	1876	1880	1884	1888	1892	1896	1900	1904	1908	δ
1. Alabama	....	....	....	....	79.6	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	20.1	59.5
2. Arkansas	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	64.7	....	....	....	33.5	....	31.2
3. California	....	....	....	....	38.3	....	....	....	....	....	62.6	....	....	....	24.3
4. Colorado	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
5. Connecticut	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	86.4	....	57.0	29.4
6. Delaware	....	....	....	....	72.7	....	....	83.6	72.6	....	....	....	....	....	11.0
7. Florida	....	....	....	....	....	88.2	....	....	....	....	....	....	24.4	....	63.8
8. Georgia	....	....	....	....	....	62.2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	22.1	26.9
9. Idaho	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
10. Illinois	....	....	....	....	69.7	....	....	....	....	....	97.5	....	....	....	27.8
11. Indiana	....	....	....	....	....	96.0	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	88.1	7.9
12. Iowa	....	....	....	....	64.4	....	....	....	....	....	88.3	....	....	....	23.9
13. Kansas	....	....	....	....	....	62.0	....	....	91.4	....	....	....	....	....	29.4
14. Kentucky	....	....	....	....	62.4	....	....	....	....	....	87.2	....	....	....	24.8
15. Louisiana	....	....	....	....	....	72.8	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	14.9	57.9
16. Maine	....	....	....	....	....	....	76.7	....	....	....	....	....	42.9	....	33.8
17. Maryland	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	83.6	....	67.3	....	16.3
18. Massachusetts	....	....	....	....	47.4	56.4	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	9.0
19. Michigan	....	....	....	....	62.2	....	....	....	80.9	....	80.2	....	....	....	18.7
20. Minnesota	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	82.0	....	....	53.0	29.0
21. Mississippi	....	....	....	....	....	82.3	....	....	....	....	....	....	15.3	....	67.0
22. Missouri	....	....	....	....	63.3	....	....	....	....	....	....	79.7	....	....	16.4
23. Montana	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
24. Nebraska	....	....	....	....	44.3	....	....	....	....	....	....	79.9	....	....	35.6
25. Nevada	....	....	....	....	....	89.5	....	44.1	....	....	....	....	....	....	45.4
26. New Hampshire	....	....	....	....	....	....	82.1	....	....	....	66.1	....	....	....	16.3
27. New Jersey	....	....	....	....	....	81.2	81.8	....	....	....	....	....	....	64.7	17.1
28. New York	....	....	....	....	....	....	78.8	....	....	....	....	....	....	60.0	18.8
29. North Carolina	....	....	....	....	....	89.5	....	....	....	....	....	....	45.6	....	23.9
30. North Dakota	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
31. Ohio	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	88.8	....	76.5	....	12.3

32. Oklahoma	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
33. Oregon	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	72.1	....	42.4	....	29.7
34. Pennsylvania	....	....	....	....	61.9	....	79.9	....	....	....	....	....	....	59.2	20.7
35. Rhode Island	....	....	....	....	31.1	....	....	....	....	50.1	....	....	....	....	19.0
36. South Carolina	....	....	....	....	....	96.1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	18.8	77.3
37. South Dakota	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
38. Tennessee	....	....	....	....	....	76.0	....	....	78.4	....	71.8	....	47.4	47.6	31.0
39. Texas	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	82.0	....	27.9	....	54.1
40. Utah	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
41. Vermont	....	....	....	....	....	69.1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	46.1	23.0
42. Virginia	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	83.0	....	....	....	27.2	27.1	55.9
43. Washington	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
44. West Virginia	....	....	....	....	60.6	....	....	....	....	....	96.2	....	....	....	35.6
45. Wisconsin	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	85.0	....	....	69.0	14.0
46. Wyoming	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
Number, high or low	....	....	....	....	12 low	12 high	5 high	....	5 high	1 high	13 high	3 high	13 low	13 low	....
Median percentages	....	....	....	....	64.4	75.9	73.8	71.3	74.0	66.8	71.1	63.4	58.4	60.5	....

Explanation of Table V

Table V was constructed upon the data presented in Table II. It shows the year at which any particular state showed its highest or lowest percentage voting. The last column at the right, headed δ, gives the difference between the lowest and the highest percentage voting. The figures in this column are therefore equivalent to rough indices of percentage variability of any particular state; thus, the percentage variability of South Carolina is merely ten times the percentage variability of Indiana.

TABLE VI

COMPARISON OF STATES SHOWING HIGHEST AND LOWEST VOTES CAST IN 1876 AND 1896

STATE	1872	1876	1880	STATE	1892	1896	1900
Highest Percentage in 1876				Highest Percentage in 1896			
Indiana	90.7	96.0	94.4	Illinois	80.2	97.5	80.7
South Carolina	60.2	96.1	83.0	West Virginia	88.6	96.2	80.9
Nevada	77.1	89.5	52.7	Indiana	89.2	95.1	92.2
North Carolina	70.7	89.5	81.8	Ohio	79.7	88.8	85.7
Florida	75.4	88.2	83.6	Iowa	82.0	88.3	83.4
Ohio	77.7	87.0	87.7	Kentucky	72.3	87.2	85.6
Wisconsin	70.6	82.4	78.6	Wisconsin	76.9	85.0	77.5
Mississippi	74.4	82.3	48.4	Kansas	83.0	83.4	85.5
New Jersey	67.4	81.2	81.8	Maryland	72.3	83.6	67.3
Iowa	64.4	80.0	77.4	Minnesota	67.1	82.0	62.4
				Texas	72.8	82.0	56.0
Lowest Percentage in 1876				Lowest Percentage in 1896			
Rhode Island	31.1	38.5	38.0	Mississippi	17.2	18.2	16.9
Texas	42.6	49.6	63.5	South Carolina	28.6	25.9	28.5
California	38.3	54.0	50.0	Louisiana	42.5	34.3	20.7
Massachusetts	47.4	56.4	56.1	Georgia	52.7	35.4	23.4
Nebraska	44.3	58.0	67.7	Florida	34.5	38.3	28.4
Kansas	71.5	62.0	75.7	Rhode Island	50.1	47.6	44.4
Georgia	55.8	62.2	49.0	Arkansas	54.7	51.6	40.7
Arkansas	63.4	63.8	58.6	Massachusetts	55.7	61.6	49.1
Maine	52.6	65.6	76.7	Alabama	68.4	52.1	37.7
Oregon	53.0	69.8	68.4	Washington	56.0	53.4	54.9

TABLE A

	1872	1876	1880	Source
Democratic variability	81	107	114	Table I, col. III
Percentage voting, variability	177	124	134	Table I, col. IV
Medians of percentage voting	64.4	75.9	73.8	Table I, col. V
Number of states showing high or low percentage voting	12 Low	12 High	5 High	Table V
Number of states showing decrease or increase percentage voting	19 9	2 38	20 10	Table I, cols. VII and VIII

TABLE B

	1892	1896	1900	Source
Republican variability	143	202	194	Table I, col. II
Percentage voting, variability	153	190	198	Table I, col. IV
Medians of percentage voting	66.8	71.1	63.4	Table I, col. V
Number of states showing high or low percentage voting	1 High	13 High	3 High	Table V
Number of states showing decrease or increase percentage voting	26 8	15 25	28 11	Table I, cols. VII and VIII

TABLE VII

COMPARISON OF VOTES CAST REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRATIC FOR THE TEN MOST POPULOUS STATES*

Year	Illinois	Indiana	Iowa	Massachusetts	Michigan	Missouri	New York	Ohio	Pennsylvania	Wisconsin
1872.....	*+56,465*	*+22,515*	*+60,387*	*+74,212*	*+59,179*	*−32,318*	*+53,455*	*+37,531*	*+137,548*	*+185,15*
Republican.....	241,237	186,147	131,566	133,472	136,199	119,116	440,736	281,852	349,589	104,992
Democratic.....	184,772	163,632	71,179	59,260	77,020	151,434	387,281	244,321	212,041	86,477
1876.....	*+19,631*	*−5,515*	*+59,205*	*+41,286*	*+25,439*	*−58,048*	*−32,742*	*+7,516*	*+17,984*	*+6,141*
Republican.....	278,232	208,011	171,326	150,063	166,534	145,029	489,207	330,698	384,142	130,068
Democratic.....	258,601	213,526	112,121	108,777	141,095	203,077	521,949	323,182	366,158	123,927
1880.....	*+40,716*	*+6,642*	*+78,059*	*+53,245*	*+53,889*	*−55,042*	*+21,033*	*+34,227*	*+37,211*	*+30,263*
Republican.....	318,037	232,164	183,904	165,205	185,190	153,567	555,544	375,048	444,713	144,897
Democratic.....	277,321	225,522	105,845	111,960	131,301	208,609	534,511	340,821	407,502	114,634
1888.....	*+22,104*	*+2,348*	*+31,726*	*+32,037*	*+22,918*	*−25,701*	*+14,373*	*+19,599*	*+79,458*	*+21,321*
Republican.....	370,475	263,361	211,603	183,892	236,387	236,253	650,338	416,054	526,091	176,553
Democratic.....	348,371	261,013	179,877	151,855	213,469	261,954	635,965	396,455	446,633	155,232
1892.....	*−26,993*	*−7,125*	*+23,429*	*+26,001*	*+20,412*	*−41,866*	*−45,518*	*+ 1,072*	*+63,747*	*−6,224*
Republican.....	399,288	255,615	219,795	202,814	222,708	226,762	609,350	405,187	516,011	171,101
Democratic.....	426,281	262,740	196,366	176,813	202,296	268,628	654,868	404,115	452,264	177,325
1896.....	*+142,607*	*+17,542*	*+55,552*	*+173,265*	*+56,078*	*−58,727*	*+268,469*	*+51,109*	*+295,072*	*+106,612*
Republican.....	607,130	323,748	289,293	278,976	293,072	304,940	819,838	525,991	728,300	268,135
Democratic.....	464,523	306,206	223,741	105,711	236,994	363,667	551,369	474,882	433,228	165,523
1900.....	*+94,924*	*+26,482*	*+98,543*	*+81,889*	*+104,584*	*−37,830*	*+143,551*	*+69,036*	*+288,433*	*+106,597*
Republican.....	597,985	336,063	307,808	238,866	316,269	314,092	822,013	543,918	712,665	265,760
Democratic.....	503,061	309,581	209,265	156,977	211,685	351,922	678,462	474,882	424,232	159,163

* These figures were obtained from the *Fact Book's* compilation.

EXPLANATION OF TABLE VII

The data for this table were obtained from the *Fact Book's* compilation: The italic figures above the Republican and Democratic votes represent: + the Republican plurality, and − the Democratic plurality.

TABLE VIII

POSITION OF EACH STATE AT EACH ELECTION YEAR WITH REFERENCE TO PERCENTAGE VOTING

State	Percentage Variation	1872	1876	1880	1884	1888	1892	1896	1900	1904	1908	δ*
1. Alabama	59.5	2	21	30	29	31	21	35	37	39	42	40
2. Arkansas	31.2	22	30	29	28	25	36	36	36	35	36	14
3. California	24.3	36	35	34	32	30	31	28	31	23	22	14
4. Colorado	....	..	..	31	31	28	35	..	..	..	..	..
5. Connecticut	29.4	21	22	19	20	22	19	24	2	21	25	23
6. Delaware	11.0	8	20	14	7	21	5	15	13	4	6	17
7. Florida	63.8	5	5	3	10	18	42	39	39	38	39	39
8. Georgia	26.9	30	31	35	37	37	38	40	40	40	40	10
9. Idaho	....	..	..	..	..	..	39	27	..	..	..	..
10. Illinois	27.8	12	19	12	17	20	6	1	10	11	10	19
11. Indiana	7.9	1	2	1	1	2	1	3	1	2	2	2
12. Iowa	23.9	19	11	13	6	7	4	5	7	7	9	15
13. Kansas	29.4	9	32	16	4	3	3	9	5	15	8	29
14. Kentucky	24.8	24	14	21	22	12	17	6	4	5	4	20
15. Louisiana	57.9	13	24	37	34	34	41	41	41	43	43	30
16. Maine	33.8	32	29	15	23	26	30	32	34	33	35	20
17. Maryland	16.3	15	15	18	14	10	18	8	8	13	13	10
18. Massachusetts	9.0	33	34	32	30	33	33	37	33	26	30	11
19. Michigan	18.7	25	13	17	11	9	15	13	15	16	20	16
20. Minnesota	29.0	17	26	23	24	14	22	10	22	25	26	16
21. Mississippi	67.0	6	9	36	33	36	44	43	42	42	44	38
22. Missouri	16.4	23	25	20	19	15	13	16	12	10	7	18
23. Montana	....	..	..	..	..	..	27	29	23	24	27	..
24. Nebraska	35.6	34	33	26	25	19	23	18	11	20	15	23
25. Nevada	45.4	4	3	33	35	32	29	33	27	31	21	39
26. New Hampshire	16.3	7	12	5	12	16	14	25	16	14	16	20
27. New Jersey	17.1	16	10	6	15	17	11	17	17	12	19	13
28. New York	18.8	14	16	10	13	13	9	22	18	18	23	14
29. North Carolina	23.9	10	4	7	5	4	8	12	19	32	28	28
30. North Dakota	....	..	..	..	..	..	34	31	24	22	14	..

*Median δ at 18½; Q_1=29 (upper), Q_3=14 (lower).

31. Ohio	12.3	3	6	2	2	5	7	4	3	6	3	5
32. Oklahoma	....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	17	..
33. Oregon	29.7	31	27	24	26	29	25	20	26	34	29	14
34. Pennsylvania	20.7	26	17	9	18	23	24	19	21	19	24	17
35. Rhode Island	19.0	37	37	38	38	35	40	38	35	28	32	12
36. South Carolina	77.3	28	1	4	36	38	43	42	38	41	41	42
37. South Dakota	....	..	..	..	..	..	20	14	6	8	11	..
38. Tennessee	31.0	20	23	22	21	11	26	21	29	29	31	20
39. Texas	54.1	35	36	27	16	24	16	11	30	36	37	26
40. Utah	....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
41. Vermont	23.0	29	28	25	27	27	37	30	28	30	34	12
42. Virginia	55.9	18	18	28	9	6	12	23	25	37	38	32
43. Washington	....	..	..	..	..	..	32	34	32	27	33	..
44. West Virginia	35.6	27	7	8	3	1	2	2	9	3	5	26
45. Wisconsin	14.0	11	8	11	8	8	10	7	14	9	12	7
46. Wyoming	....	..	..	..	..	..	28	26	20	17	18	..

voters voting for 1876 and 1896 with preceding and succeeding election years.

The second consideration must be studied in the light of the data presented in Table VII. A study of the Republican pluralities (+) for the ten most populous states for the year 1876 shows that in seven states out of ten the plurality for 1876 was less than for 1872 or 1880 and the Democratic plurality of Indiana was less than the Republican plurality for Indiana in 1872 or 1880. For 1896, as compared with preceding or succeeding election years no such relation holds. Republican pluralities decrease and increase, and Democratic pluralities become Republican pluralities. But it is this very change in the size and allegiance of pluralities that is indicative of a shifting margin of intelligent voters. The increasing variability is in large measure due to this shift, because a study of the size of the pluralities of 1896 shows greater divergence between them than between the pluralities of 1892 or 1900, and a much greater divergence than between the pluralities of 1872, 1876, 1880, or 1888.

From the analysis of these considerations it can be concluded that the increasing variability of popular vote at presidential elections is real evidence of an increasing independence in voting. Intelligent political action seems to be on the increase in approximately the ratio shown by the increasing variabilities of the popular vote at presidential elections. The other aspect of this change is the evidence it presents that the rigidity of our political traditions is decreasing. The increasing variability of the popular vote in so far as it is evidence of increasing independence of political action shows a growing impatience with the restraints of political tradition. The marginal shift is excellent proof of this. The negative aspect of the increasing elasticity of our political traditions is shown by the increasing number of political parties since 1856.